

Federal Policing Structures - Mexico and Comparisons,

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## Executive Summary

This report examines Mexico's drug and police culture while analyzing police cultures in similarly organized countries. Drugs and cartels have a long and violent history within Mexico and the problem is spilling over the border into the United States. With corrupt and insufficiently trained police forces, the ability to effectively fight the drug war is extremely limited. Both the United States and Mexico have worked together to try to combat these connected issues, but more needs to be done. Key recommendations were found by analyzing the bipartite structures in Brazil and South Africa with a focus on Armenia. These recommendations include the following:

- Prioritize the interests of the people
- Standardized training
- Distinguish a disciplinary authority to investigate human rights violations
- Practice community-based policing using well-trained officers
- Senior National Guard positions not to be reserved for friends of political appointees
- Improve communication and information sharing
- U.S. Technology and systems recommendations
- Appoint a cabinet level Drug Czar

\*Limitations to this research include the use of only online materials and database articles and journals.

## **SECTION I**

### **A Short History of the Drug Problem**

Starting in the early 1980's, cartels in Mexico essentially had free reign. There was a single party government that was easy for cartels to infiltrate. Heroin, cocaine, and marijuana was trafficked from Columbia through Mexico into the United States. The major cartels were so successful that individual fragments became greedy and split from their main cartels. This term was known as "balkanization." Money and territory were fought over and brutal killings ensued. In the 1980's the United States' War on Drugs was in full swing and the U.S. government sent millions of dollars to provide paramilitaries training in hopes they would fight the war on drugs within Mexico.

In Mexico's 2000 election, a new president came into power who waged a war on the cartels. This President, Vincente Fox, felt that the only way to establish control was through expanded governmental power. This entailed military personnel replacing corrupt police forces, establishing a federal police force, and allowing the United States to assist with the capturing of cartel kingpins. Homicides skyrocketed to over 120,000 over a 6-year period (Lee, 2019).

As well, President Vicente Fox changed the political landscape so the cartels could not be the major controlling force in Mexico any longer. However, this shift led to increased violence and outward expansion of the cartels. Despite both the United States and Mexican governments' increase in enforcing drug trafficking laws, citizens maintained a high demand for illicit drugs - keeping the cartels in business. Successors of President Vicente Fox declared war on the cartels, and the United States declared a "War on Drugs." Ever since 2010, the

governments of the U.S. and Mexico have worked together to end drug trafficking, violent crime, and overdoses by reforms of policing and judiciary power, economic development, and social programs.

The United States launched a security partnership in 2007 by President George W. Bush that has appropriated over a billion dollars in aid for the Mexican government to fight cartels. This money was also allotted to improve communities, establish a high-tech border and institutionalize the rule of law. The U.S also provided military equipment along with sending CIA operatives and security operatives to help train government forces (Lee, 2019).

In the past, President Obama pledged U.S. support to Mexico to help attack drugs and transnational organized crime through increased cooperation and enforcement efforts. Today President Donald J. Trump along with 129 nations have pledged to “cut off the supply of illicit drugs by stopping their production...and flow across borders (Nichols, 2018).”

Despite these efforts, drugs continue to be a problem. According to James P. Farwell (2014), drug trafficking in Mexico has always been a problem, but there was a significant rise when the US successfully disrupted the Colombian cartels, and they shifted their operations and "outsourced" drug trafficking to Mexican gangs. This shift exacerbated the drug problem in Mexico. Farwell states that the turf battle in Mexico “transcends borders and raises *hemispheric security* issues.” It is stressed that because the US possesses vital security interests linked to Mexico, we must recognize what is occurring in Mexico and deal with it realistically (Lee, 2019).

Administrations across the United States have taken a stand with Mexico in order to strengthen security, reform the criminal justice system, and fight against the passage of illegal drugs through the southern U.S. border. These drug cartels are responsible for the largest

amounts of heroin, meth, cocaine, fentanyl, and other opioids reaching U.S. soil. According to the Drug Enforcement Administration, the greatest threats to the United States are the *Sinaloa Cartel*, *Jalisco New Generation*, *Juarez Cartel*, *Gulf Cartel*, *Los Zetas*, & *Beltran-Leyva Organization* (DEA, 2018). Fueled by political corruption, these groups quickly rose to power in the 80s and remain a threat today. Currently, the United States provides financial aid through the Merida Initiative in order to break up criminal groups, strengthen communities, enforce the law, and monitor the border (Nelson, 2009).

The Southwest border is one of the weakest spots because so many people are legitimately trying to cross the border legally and sometimes the volume is too much for the border patrol agents to cover. Most of the violence is cartel related, whether between different cartels or the cartel against the government. One of the biggest concerns that is brought into question relating to violence is the disrupted supply routes. When these drug runs are caught or interrupted in some way it causes a lot of issues between the different organizations that control those routes. One of the first things that has been done is the replacement of police with military personnel. President Felipe Calderon subsequently attacked one of the biggest issues that Mexico faces which is corrupt public officials. So many of the local government officials are in the pocket of drug cartels that the cities are unable to function legally as the cartels are essentially running them (Farwell, 2014).

Marijuana and cocaine are smuggled into the United States in exchange for money and guns which are then smuggled back into Mexico. This impacts the United States by creating an issue of increasing illegal drug sales. It has also impacted the United States by "spilling" the drug war across the Mexican border. The increased violence related to drugs causes parents to send

their kids to school in the United States; especially at the El Paso border crossing. Despite the United States sending over a billion dollars in Mexico to fight the drug war, the cartels are still able to payoff law enforcement officials. Juarez residents have moved out of the city, and jobs that were brought there by the United States are decreasing. So not only does the United States lose that revenue/product, the residents of Juarez have lost jobs and money which helped them afford to live (Lee, 2019).

### **Trafficking Routes and Impacts on the United States**

According to the National Drug Threat Assessment in 2010, by the U.S. Department of Justice National Drug Intelligence Center, drugs were seized in transit to the United States by 97.7% land, 1.5% sea and 0.8% air. Smuggling drugs by land is the most popular means of transporting drugs because of the tunnels and more than one entry site along the U.S. border. Not only is there a fence or wall which protects parts of the border, but there is also a strong presence of Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) agents with cutting edge technology strewn throughout the border in hopes of stopping smuggling. However, over the years the cartel have dug tunnels and have sent people farther into uninhabitable lands trying to circumvent those security measures but the more money that flows from the government into the border, the harder it is getting for smugglers (DEA, 2018).

Smugglers are continuing to use pleasure vessels to smuggle into Florida in hopes of blending into normal traffic entering the Florida ports and with the 1200 miles of coastline that needs patrolling, it is very easy for smugglers to enter the United States. The three main things smuggled into Florida are: people, cocaine and marijuana but the more successful that



smugglers are, the farther they will push their luck. With the government only focusing on the Mexico border, it is very likely that Florida will continue to be a hotspot for smugglers.

A common tactic that is used by Mexican drug cartels is to hire an independent transportation personnel to smuggle the drugs into the United States. By using a complex series of employees, the people running cartels, like Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, are difficult to investigate by law enforcement officials because the smugglers tend to know nothing about the drug kingpin. Lastly when thinking about land one should still consider that some still go as far as smuggling by foot. According to the Custom and Border Protection (DHS, 2017). "officers regularly find drugs ingested, concealed in body cavities, taped to bodies, hidden inside vehicle seat cushions, gas tanks, dash boards, etc." It is important to note that cities that are most connected to drug markets are Chicago, Denver, Detroit, Houston, Miami, New York, and Tucson.

Second is maritime transportation, where drugs are being loaded into shipment containers concealed with other goods. According to one study, more than 80 percent of America's cocaine is smuggled through waterways. Fishing trawlers, go-fasts, and self-propelled semi-submersibles are a few ways drug smugglers are keeping their business. Fish trawlers have built-in intelligent navigation technology. Smugglers using these have concealed drugs in with regular cargo, welded packing to the boat, and even liquefied cocaine to avoid detection. Go-fasts are a more desired means of transporting. These boats are made of wood, painted dark colors, and lie low in the water making them difficult to be detected by radars. It is a simple task for these boats to blend in with other legitimate shipping boats. This makes it difficult for

the Coast Guard to interdict and intercept. Self-propelled semi-submersibles are able to haul the largest delivery of the three (Chalk, 2011).

One of the biggest drugs that is smuggled in is cocaine. Cocaine enters the United States after it is received in Mexico from South American shipments- typically via maritime movement. The majority of cocaine enters through San Diego and the Rio Grande Valley. United States border officials “also intercepted more than 200,000 pounds of cocaine as it was being shipped over the Pacific Ocean from South America.” Secondly, marijuana is the next drug of choice to be smuggled. Marijuana is most often transported in personal and commercial vehicles, trains, boats, drones, and human carriers. The majority is brought in between Ports of Entry on both the northern and southern borders.

Last would be air, which is the least likely way to smuggle. Since the percentage is so small for air way to transport there are not a lot of statistics on it but policies that address people to not do it. While it is the least likely of the three to be used it is always important to acknowledge that that option is still available (Reed, 2015).

Figure 1 (Reed, 2015).



## SECTION II

### **Government Structure**

The structure of the Mexican federal government is similar to that of the structure of the United States government. The general division of responsibility pertaining to branches of government of both are identical. Each government has an executive, a legislative, and a judicial branch which all represent Mexico's thirty-one states. Voting, appointment, and

position description vary slightly between the governments. The Mexican government also prioritizes tasks and issues in a manner that is dissimilar to the United States.

The executive branch is headed by Mexico's president. The president serves one six-year term and cannot be re-elected. Unlike election in the United States, the Mexican president wins by majority of registered votes, not electoral votes. The President is the head of state and the commander of the military and does not have a Vice President (Sawe, 2019).

The Legislative branch is very similar to ours with two houses serving within the branch, a Senate and a Chamber of Deputies which is a lot like the House of Representatives. The two houses deal with budgets, ratifying diplomatic appointments, and foreign policy. Members of the senate serve six year terms and deputies serve three year terms. The main difference between the Mexican Legislative branch and the American Legislative branch is that in Mexico, elected officials can only serve one term at a time. No consecutive terms can be attained so an official has to take three years off before running again for a spot in the Legislative branch. Responsibilities of the legislative include voting on legislation and managing the national budget. Should there become a presidential vacancy, the legislative branch is tasked with appointing a provisional President considering there is no Vice President (Sawe, 2019).

In the Judicial branch, just like in the United States, the highest court is the Supreme Court; however in Mexico the Supreme Court is made up of twenty-one magistrates and five auxiliary judges. These justices serve life terms, however they can be impeached. Supreme Court justices are appointed by the President. The President creates a base of candidates and allows other members of the cabinet to vote on the appointment. But the President ultimately has the final say. Mexico's judicial branch includes state and federal legal systems. The courts

are divided into groups depending on the types of cases they try, such as Penal Affairs, Administrative Affairs, Civil Affairs, and Labor Affairs. Different judges in their respective courts hear specific types of cases. There is a fifth chamber which deals overflow court cases that is made up of the auxiliary judges. Though the cases get distributed among the courts, the Mexican courts are still overloaded; which is the same problem that courts face within the United States (Library of Congress, 1996).

While the government structure of Mexico is similar to the government structure of the United States, there are differences that can work in Mexico's favor. If outside influences like favoritism and corruption are minimized, Mexico can become a model for other governments looking to restructure.

Corruption within Mexico has always been of major concern. Paying off cops or not dealing with the crime at hand remains a daily occurrence. The people of Mexico should be able to trust their law enforcement. Additionally, Mexico needs to emphasize creating a safe environment where the police are not corrupt, and the citizens feel safe.

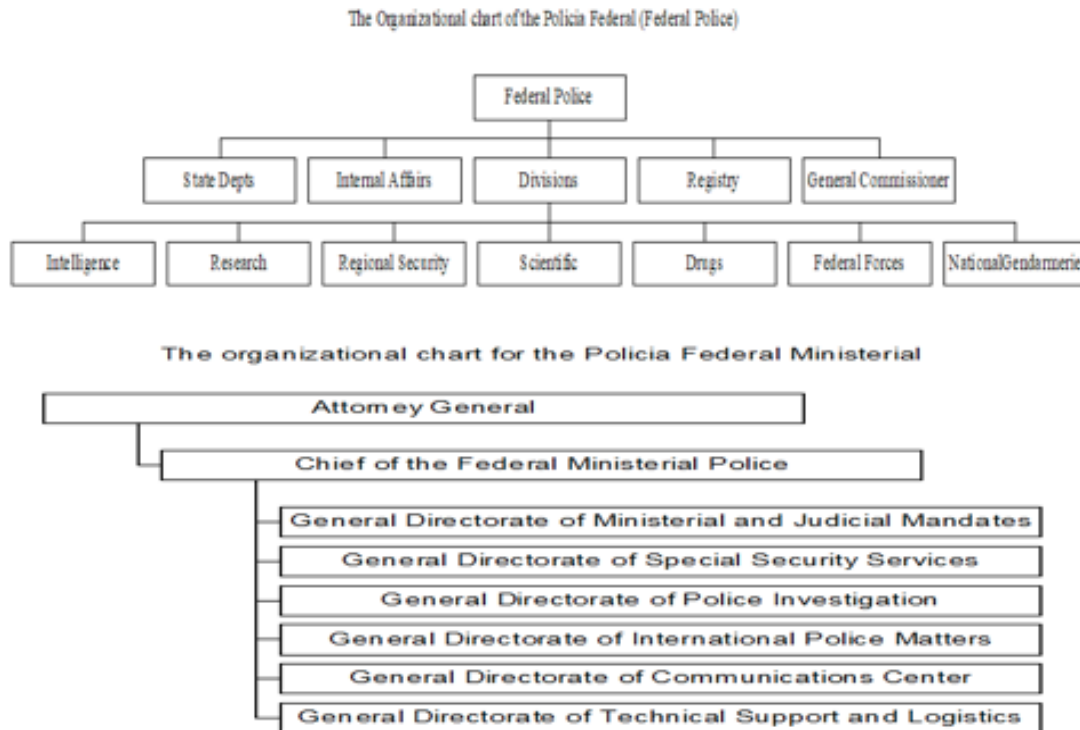
After multiple police reforms, Mexico established two separate forces when dealing with crime and investigation. Federal Police are the organization which is stopping crime. It replaced the Federal Preventive Police which lacked investigating powers. This is where the federal investigations agency transferred power and title to become the Ministerial Federal Police. The Federal Agency of Investigation was created in restructuring due to the corruption found in the Federal Judicial Police. It ultimately, created a six-structured policing regime which allowed checks and balances across all agencies. Roles were set for each department, accountability improved, and all channels reported back to the President. This lessened and

ultimately built stronger bonds of trust among the agencies (University of Arizona, 2018).

Furthermore, the Federal Police were established not only to prevent crime within the Federal Police, but to become an institute of excellence capable of cooperating with local police and prosecutors in investigating crimes of high social impact. Figure 2 below shows a breakdown of the Federal Police and the Ministerial Federal Police (Federal Ministerial Police, n.d.).

This separation of different duties between police offices happened because of the rise of drug cartels within Mexico. The rise in drug cartels caused a higher rate of homicides and corruption to run wild within the Federal Police. Another reason for separation of police forces is primarily due to an attempt at improving community policing and effectiveness of police functions. Having two police forces allows for police responsibilities to be delegated more efficiently. Formally trained police have the ability to adequately investigate and solve crimes; while a less formally trained police force retains the capability for the safety and security needs for a community. There was a lack of communication before the separation of agencies which continues but at least now the agencies can focus on their specific area of law enforcement. Mexico still has a lot of work to do. Only time will make the people trust law enforcement and for the President to invest time in creating a corruption free country. One major change discussed below involves the use of the Mexican military in policing.

Figure 2 (Federal Ministerial Police, n.d.).



### **SECTION III**

#### **Issues and Challenges**

A variety of flaws exist across the Mexican Police System, ranging from corruption, declining public trust, abuse, poor communications, and finally ineffective training. In the past, with the current system in place, the Mexican Federal Government did not have the proper resources nor manpower to counter these deep-rooted crime and drug problems. But there have been recent changes in 2018. Yet looking at the recent past from declining national finances for improvements ...to understaffed police agencies, all aspects of this must be addressed and questioned. More outside assistance from other countries should be considered

to aid this. Delegating responsibility to State and Local governments more, while using federal policy to ensure improvements in local policing are made ...could be more effective in fighting crime (Estevez-Soto, 2018).

Initially, an inconsistent organization structure between Federal, State and Municipal police power is responsible for some of the greatest divides. The division between who handles differing crimes creates inconsistent response times & resolution rates. Federal and State investigative police (Federal Ministerial) serve under the corresponding attorney general and are responsible for investigating crimes and carrying out judicial warrants. Federal crimes fall within the jurisdiction of the Federal Investigative Police, while homicides are investigated by the State Police. Recently, change may be on the horizon, as of October 1, 2019, the Federal Police was officially dissolved and absorbed to the National Guard, a new national police institution created by President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (Estevez-Soto, 2018). By combining these forces, training can be standardized and remain consistent across the board for all officers. Local policing approval rates should rise among the population served.

Next, the recent political system stymied Mexico from becoming a more functional democracy and eliminating financial corruption. Previous President Enrique Peña Nieto from December 1, 2012 through November 30, 2018 received the lowest approval rating in history at only 6% (Dresser, 2017). Issues ranging from declining financial stability to a poor public safety climate existed. For example, the former Minister of Finance and the current Minister of Foreign Affairs Luis Videgaray Caso, is responsible for raising the country's debt by over 50 % (Dresser, 2017). Internal corruption was also discovered wherein government funding was



being channeled to certain bureaucrats instead of for improvements for Mexico. From all points of view, that recent system is failing those it is responsible to protect. By electing officials who are qualified in matters of national finance and security, public approval will rise and the Mexican national debt should decrease.

Third, violence has remained rampant throughout the country and made world history in July 2017 as Mexico's most violent month ever. Due to a breakdown in communication throughout law enforcement agencies, Mexican citizens are going missing, and drug cartels are taking the cities back. Police studies have shown that Mexico has roughly 331,000 officers, representing an average of 231 officers for every 100,000 Mexican residents (Estevez-Soto, 2018). With a dearth of officers in relation to population, Mexican police are forced to work more hours to compensate and as a result, training is often brief or abolished altogether. Recently on October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019 in the Sinaloa City of Culiacan the Sinaloa Cartel outgunned the Army in its attempt to capture Ovidio Guzman Lopez son of drug cartel kingpin Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman in a bloody four hour fight (Grillo. 2019).

Public trust in policing must be heightened. According to a survey conducted in 2017, "Only 18% of Mexicans expressed a high level of trust in public security institutions & only 7% in the case of municipal police, while only 13% were aware of any action taken to tackle corruption" (Colladay & Cooney, 2018). An evaluation conducted by the National Public Security System in 2014 discovered that "65% of officers failed to demonstrate the required skills for protecting the public." Improper training of officers needs to be corrected.

Coupled with the distrust of law enforcement, Mexico is also well-known for its slow judicial progress, shortage of justice officials, & prison overcrowding rates (Stender, 2018). In

the eyes of the population, Mexico's current organization lacks the duty to protect civilians with just officers or even provide a fair & speedy trial. Current President, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador is attempting to alter this legacy. Obrador listed several possibilities such as "granting amnesty to low-level criminals, negotiating with crime bosses to dismantle their syndicates and confronting the human rights violations committed by soldiers, police, and public officials" (Duran-Martinez, 2019).

Mexico's current system in all aspects, is deeply rooted on a path for failure if these problems remain unaddressed. A lack of accountability in Mexico's criminal justice system remains apparent. A few changes in the near future may correct difficulties in policing practice. In examining some similar systems world-wide some solutions may be found.

#### **SECTION IV Comparisons of Similar Bipartite Systems**

##### **Brazil**

Brazil not only has a similar bipartite structure but finds itself trying to overcome governmental corruption and distrust of its past elected officials, much like Mexico. Both countries have suffered through years of violence, political corruption at every level and stagnant or declining economies. Brazil also has a federal presidential republic form of government with an elected president who is both chief of state and head of the government. Also, both countries have three branches of the government in executive, legislative and judicial branches and supreme courts as the highest court and operate with a civil law system based on a constitution. Brazil's current constitution is its seventh and was rewritten in 1988. Both nations have extremely high murder rates, which can be attributed to organized crime, or gangs/drug cartels. In comparison to the United States, which averages about five homicides for

every 100,000 citizens, Brazil's recent spike in homicides shot up to 30.8 homicides per 100,000 people. Mexico, which has also seen soaring murder rates, had 25 homicides per 100,000 people in data collected in 2018 (Federation of American Scientists, n.d.).

Brazil consists of two main police forces: federal and state. Each force carries out unique law-enforcement functions. The federal police force consists of the Federal Police, Federal Highway Police, and the Federal Railroad Police. These federal forces are responsible for investigating national and international crimes, including primarily narcotics, terrorism, immigration, and border investigations. The Federal Police also investigate human rights violations committed by state authorities. Perhaps Mexico could adopt many of the policies and procedures of the federal police forces of Brazil to combat prevalent narcotics and corruption. State police forces consist of two units also: civil and military police. While under the law enforcement umbrella, each unit reports to their individual state governments. The military police are what most Brazilians recognize as a "typical police officer." Military police perform patrols and exercise arresting power to maintain public order. Military police are also considered Brazilian Army Reserve Corps, in which they can be called to serve in the event of a war. Civil police perform more localized investigations and are tasked with keeping police stations operational. Once the military police arrest a suspect of a crime, they are then transferred to civil police custody, unless the suspect committed a federal offense in which case, the suspect would be transferred to Federal Police custody (Library of congress, 2019).

In Sao Paolo and Rio de Janeiro, there have been attempts in the past to unify civil and military police into one state police force. In recognition of a need to share jurisdiction,

intelligence, and resources between state and federal police forces, the National Public Safety Force (NPSF) operates under the supervision of the Justice Minister. The NPSF is formed by ‘volunteer’ State Military Policemen and Federal Highway Patrolmen, selected by their respective commanders ...” (Federation of American Scientists, n.d.) The NPSF is used in crisis situations when state level police units are in need of federal support. A common task of the NPSF is the enforcement and investigations of organized crime. Municipal Guards were created to provide a way of enforcing community policing. They are tasked with protecting city property, and patrolling city spaces (parks and public schools), and supporting city inspections and bylaws enforcement. In high population areas, they are also known to provide traffic control. Because the Municipal Guards know the most about the community, state police forces often use them in joint operations and understanding the latest criminal activities and trends.

### **South Africa**

In South Africa, there is the South African Police Service (SAPS) and there are police forces on the municipal level. SAPS falls under the Ministry of Safety and Security and is responsible for crime prevention, investigation of criminal activity, and apprehending suspects and assisting in their prosecution. The Municipal Police centers its operations in large urban areas. It falls under the local government, which provides its funding, and is responsible for aiding SAPS and enforcing local laws and ordinances (Guerra, 2019).

The core function of SAPS, derived from Section 205 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 and from the SAPS Act of 1995, is to prevent, investigate, and combat crime. Additionally, they are to maintain public order, protect the inhabitants of the country and their property, and uphold and enforce the law. It is headed by a National Commissioner

and consists of deputy national commissioners and provincial commissioners who report to the National Commissioner who in turn, reports to the Minister of Police (Structure of Department of Police, n.d.).

The functions of the municipal police, according to section 64E of the SAPS Act, are traffic policing/road traffic, enforcing laws and regulations which are the responsibility of the municipality, and preventing crime, among many other tasks (Metro Police, 2016). Their duties are significantly similar to those of police officers in the United States. They must also work to assist SAPS in investigations. They are not allowed to conduct criminal investigations and must hand over any suspect or person arrested to SAPS. The municipal police report to both SAPS and their municipality, meaning they can report up to the Minister of Police if needed.

### **Armenia**

Like its Mexico counterpart, the Republic of Armenia is a country with three branches of government- the Executive, the Legislative, and the Judiciary. There is no position of Vice President in either country. In Armenia though, the president is more of a figurehead position while the power sits mainly with the prime minister. The president is commander in chief and signs proposed bills; however, the prime minister is responsible for managing all of the ministries within the country. The legislative branch is made of up to a possible 200 seat National Assembly. The National Assembly of Armenia is currently made up of one hundred and thirty-one delegates. This number is smaller compared to the number of National Assembly members in Mexico. Laws in Armenia are adopted by a majority of votes cast by delegates who are present similar to the Mexican National Assembly were laws are being adopted by a simple

majority of Members in the National house (Ivković, S. , K., & Haberfield, M. R., 2014). The Judicial Branch is made of multiple different courts and the Court of Cession serves as the highest court within the country. A main difference is that while the Court of Cession is the highest court, if a case arises that deals with constitutional validity, the Constitutional Court takes the case. All courts within the Judicial Branch work independently from the other two branches within Armenia.

Armenia's police force's main concern is the trafficking of illegal drugs, people, and goods while also dealing with money laundering and violent crime. These problems are very similar to those of Mexico. The Chief of the National Police is appointed by the president and is made up of one central body while being supported by 11 different territorial departments. Also like Mexico, the police force is strife with corruption; and has ineffective training, resources and procedural failures. One reason why corruption is easy in Armenia is there is no body within or outside the police force which investigates police assault. This makes the police very unpopular with the public and there is very little trust for them. A majority of the public find the police to be corrupt while businesses believe the same; and do not believe they can be protected by the police (Harutyunyan, A. (2019).

Furthermore, the police force in Armenia are accused of ill-treatment and torture of the arrestees just in the name of extracting information from them. This is the same with Mexico where police mistreated and tortured the arrestees.

In 2001, Armenia passed new laws reforming and reorganizing their police structure. In this effort, The Police of the Republic of Armenia (PRA) was formed. The PRA is referred to as a

“body adjunct to the Government of Armenia” (Armenia, 2009). The PRA’s central body contains the command staff and consists of various deputies and specialized branches. The activities of the PRA are directed by the Chief of the Police, who is appointed by the President at the nomination of the Prime Minister (Armenia, 2009). The PRA also includes the Police Troops, Educational Centre and the Police Academy. The Police Troops serve a very different purpose than the rest of the PRA and are meant to serve in a more militarized role. They also have a different leader, the Commander of the Police Troops, while under the umbrella of the Police of Armenia, and find themselves with assorted different tasks than the traditional police forces. Police troops are military units tasked to protect public order, state security, and defend the country (Ivković & Haberfield, 2014).

What follows is can be applied from these three national organizations to the Mexican problem, along with some other ideas.

## **SECTION V**

### **Reform Recommendations**

Police reform is not easy to implement, and police efficiency is not always easy to sustain in a country that has leaders or officials who do not have a solid foundation. This foundation of the Mexican police must strengthen public interest, trust must be truly cultivated, and efficiency in their own work, seen as producing results. Brazil, South Africa, and Armenia faced challenges in their police structure and were able to make some changes in their reforms producing a healthier police structure. It is an assumption that these changes can also

be made in Mexican police reform to also produce an improved, efficient and accountable police structure.

Mexico has attempted to improve its policing system for quite some time but has made very little progress. Establishing multiple agencies that do not have adequate resources to face crime throughout the country will not work. The Mexican Congress had made several constitutional changes which were supposed to be fully implemented in a timely manner. However, only 3 of the 32 States did so. Police corruption, public trust issues and inefficiency are remain within the police organization. Mexico developed a National Public Security System which would allow collaboration and cooperation between federal and state agencies (Meyer, 2014). This also created accreditation standards; plus explicit procedures for hiring, training and evaluating officials. However, it needs to be more broadly implemented to the local level.

In Armenia for example, there was little trust of police organizations and human rights violations continued. But Armenia turned to using the military (as Mexico has) to enforce public order, provide security and protect their country (Ivković & Haberfield, 2014). Armenia also developed different protocols for how those arrested await trials. They are only kept separately in facilities up to 72 hours; which is opposite from the protocols used in Mexico.

Brazil's police structure is broken down into federal, state and local---similar to the United States. In Brazil the Federal Police, Federal Highway Police and Federal Railroad Police highlight the Brazilian Security Structure. The state police consist of both military and civil. Local police are known as the Municipal Guards. Armenia's and Brazil's police reforms and challenges can influence the changes recommended for Mexico's police reform. It is crucial for politicians



at all levels to show more interest and make a reform a true priority. Interestingly, Brazil's federal police also have the authority to investigate human rights violations by local or state authorities. Brazil's municipal guards have a community-based policing approach which allows for trust to grow between citizens and police. Mexico could establish their own version of a "municipal guard" properly trained on community-based policing which would allow them to rebuild the trust that has been lost, even with "the merge."

Implementation of police reform across the 32 Mexican States has been sporadic at best, with only a handful meeting deadlines for implementation. Skeptics of the reforms have argued that the system was shortsighted and insufficient to tackle corruption among the police, prosecutors and even judges. Mexico must continue to build and strengthen its public institutions from the bottom up. The citizens' trust in the system is so low that only 10%-15% of crimes are even reported and only 14% of those result in a conviction (Romero, 2018).

### **Accountability and Professional Evaluation**

"The most significant challenge ahead is ensuring that corrupt and abusing officers are held accountable for their actions" (Meyer, 2014). Mexican police forces have been quite proactive in creating laws and developing policies and procedures to ensure human rights. However, the police must also be policed. Police organizations must refrain from corruption by investigating and reprimanding those involved in improper conduct. Meyer (2014). Several suggestions on improving this ensue. Junior police officers and junior Mexican National Guard officers should be able to report to any disciplinary committee, if coerced senior officers to participate in any illicit activities. Police do this but it is contrary to the rules and regulations of

the National Guard. Another recommendation is that no senior jobs in the National Guard should be reserved for relatives or close friends of political appointees

### **All Ranks Training**

As the roles of the new merged forces are defined ...standardized training is paramount. Roles and responsibilities of the National Guard must be clarified. According to Semple and Villegas (2019) the military is not trained for community policing. Combined training in the ability to conduct thorough criminal investigations must be provided and then improved. Each officer must become familiar with his district and comfortable with the community. Training must remain uniform across all areas: physical agility, classroom time, community involvement, and working with weapons. Regarding training with reclassifying positions and ranks, due to “the merge,” much of the current law enforcement are not current on their training requirements. It is important to reconstitute unified basic training on all levels. Furthermore, a training program that goes over both roles of the Mexican Federal Police and the National Guard, on the new roles of both entities now that they are combined, is recommended. This training would include any updated regulations due to the merge as well, with personality and community bonding training.

### **Communication and Information Sharing**

Improvement in communications needs to include information sharing among all levels of law enforcement. Information sharing is critical in improving law enforcement’s ability to detect, prevent and respond to crimes and acts of terrorism. Criminal records, law enforcement incidents reports, judicial actions and watch lists are all information that should be

communicated and shared within law enforcement agencies particularly the National Guard. All of this information must be stored and made accessible by various agencies in a form usable by each agency, which will be discussed. As mentioned in 2018, the National Peace and Security Plan 2018-2024 was created ushered in the National Guard of Mexico into law enforcement. The National Guard was formed by absorbing units and officers from the Federal Police, Military, and Naval Police to prevent and combat overall crime. Ultimate command of the National Guard of Mexico goes to the Secretary of Security and Civilian Protection. The Mexican government must ensure that communication between the three former separate institutions becomes a dominant emphasis.

Considering informational communication, why the change was needed and how the command structure will altered should be clearly communicated. The Federal Police are upset with the change and dislike the National Guard and their policies and tactics. Promoting vastly improved communication between the two entities is a must.

Improvement in communications needs to include information sharing among all levels of law enforcement. Information sharing is critical in improving law enforcement's ability to detect, prevent and respond to crimes and acts of terrorism. All of this information must be stored and made accessible by various agencies in a form usable by each agency. The U.S. utilizes the Law Enforcement Information Sharing Program Exchange Specification (LEXS)—a subset of the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM). There is also the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS), the National Crime Information Center, Integrated fingerprint ID system, regional sharing systems, the National Data Exchange and Department of Homeland Security Law Enforcement Information Sharing Service (LEISS). Developing similar

systems for Mexico would be a fresh and innovative change. Finally, learning to work cohesively and not against the other force is vital to success in combining the two forces.

### **Appoint a Cabinet Level Drug Czar**

The Mexican government should create a cabinet level position where the incumbent's sole responsibility is to carry out and execute directives from the President for the winning the drug war. This cabinet level position would give the incumbent the highest rank in the drug war, reporting only to the President (Mexico Executive Branch, 2019). The United States has a similar position, the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). The ONDCP (2019) states that the Director is ... "the principal advisor to the President on drug control issues." This position has been informally titled the "Drug Czar" (PBS, 2000). The former Director of the ONDCP for Bill Clinton's administration was General Barry McCaffrey, who spoke about the effectiveness that stems from one person authority in this fight against drugs: "The law was rewritten and it has given me considerable power to influence budgets. I can de-certify a department budget and order them to put more money into it for combatting drugs." (PBS, 2000). The incumbent can also identify the correct target areas for increased enforcement and ensure appropriate funding is allocated to where needed. Although it did not work out for the U.S., perhaps Mexico can effectively appoint one, sole source for the drug war...and make it work.

In conclusion, Mexico cannot be criticized for not trying to win this battle. The National Peace and Security Plan 2018-2024 underscores that this government will take extraordinary measures to attempt to triumph in this long, violent, twilight struggle. Benet Wilson once

quipped, “Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures. We saw a need that needed to be filled, and we stepped in to help.” Mexico has taken that step.

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